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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 20th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. SAMADI (Islamic Republic of Iran)
(Vice-Chairman)

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In the absence of Mr. Muthara (Kenya), Mr. Samadi (Islamic Republic of Iran), Vice-Chairman, took the chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 86: COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE QUESTION OF PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS IN ALL THEIR ASPECTS (continued) (A/49/875-S/1995/235, A/49/876, A/49/886-S/1995/276; A/50/137-S/1995/295, A/50/215-S/1995/475, A/50/230, A/50/254-S/1995/501, A/50/437, A/50/702, A/50/711-S/1995/911, A/50/572; and A/C.4/50/L.10*)

1. Mr. MERNIES (Uruguay) said that his country was currently taking part in operations being carried out in Western Sahara, Angola, India and Pakistan, Iraq and Kuwait, Rwanda, Liberia, Georgia, Guatemala and Tajikistan. Despite its limited capacities, Uruguay was, in relation to its population, the Member State which was providing the highest share of military personnel for those operations. His country's foreign policy had traditionally been shaped by respect for the major principles of international law. In acting as a foreign presence, Uruguay was bound in particular by three of those principles: non-interference, respect for self-determination and peaceful settlement of disputes. His country had participated, was participating and was willing to continue participating in all operations established pursuant to the provisions of Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations.

2. His country noted with great interest the proposal to make the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations open-ended or, at least, to ensure the participation in the Committee of all Member States which provided troops for peace-keeping operations. It was also concerned about the delays in United Nations reimbursements to countries providing troops, which affected their ability to take part in other operations. In addition, in planning for peace-keeping operations, special attention should be paid to the security of the participating personnel. Lastly, his country welcomed the conclusion of an agreement under which objective criteria would be defined for determining reimbursements to countries participating in operations for equipment they provided.

3. Mr. CASSAM (Mozambique) said that a peace-keeping operation had helped to supervise and monitor the implementation of the General Peace Agreement for Mozambique which had put an end to 16 years of a devastating war in his country. As mentioned recently by its President, the peace in Mozambique had been made possible by several fundamental factors: the political will demonstrated by the parties; the positive role played by all segments of society; the spirit of tolerance and mutual accommodation; and the significant role played by the international community. The success of the operations also depended on the adoption of a pragmatic approach to the evaluation of the particular situation of each country. In that connection, the President had mentioned that peace-keeping forces must operate on the basis of consent by the parties concerned, must always act with impartiality and in accordance with their mandates, and must respect the principles of independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference. The humanitarian aspects of the operations must also be kept in mind.

4. The State was and must remain the pillar supporting the efforts of peace-keeping forces in the field. Once an operation was completed, the highest priority should be assigned to demobilization, collection of weapons and mine clearance and to the strengthening of national institutions to ensure a lasting peace. For that reason, his Government shared the view of the Secretary-General, expressed in the supplement to An Agenda for Peace (A/50/60*-S/1995/1*), that intervention by the international community should go beyond a humanitarian approach and include the promotion of national reconciliation and the creation of adequate conditions to allow the establishment of an effective government. The Secretary-General had referred to another important issue concerning peace-keeping missions: the need to appoint individuals with great diplomatic qualities to act as his special representatives or envoys.

5. Having examined the report of the Special Committee on agenda item 86 (A/50/230), his delegation wished to emphasize the importance of providing the United Nations with the necessary means to eliminate the delay between the establishment of mandates and the deployment of peace-keeping operations. It welcomed the stand-by arrangements as an important step towards establishing a permanent mechanism which would implement that approach. It was convinced that a rapid deployment of peace-keeping forces could also rely on regional arrangements and called for the strengthening of the cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in that field.

6. His delegation concurred with the view that missions should have unified command and control of operations and, in that regard, welcomed the recommendation of the Special Committee concerning the appointment of a special representative of the Secretary-General with authority over all aspects of large-scale operations.

7. He wished to express his sincere appreciation for the work accomplished by the United Nations Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ). Mozambique would continue to fulfil its obligation to work for the success of United Nations activities.

8. Mr. SALLAM (Yemen) said that peace-keeping operations were one of the basic means by which the United Nations safeguarded international peace and security. The report of the Special Committee presented a comprehensive methodology which would help the United Nations to fulfil its mandate in that area. To avoid political conflicts in a region or country, a preventive methodology and strategy should be adopted, based on the causes of the conflicts, such as poverty and underdevelopment. The international community must improve its ability to recognize and anticipate conflicts and to resolve them before they turned into armed encounters.

9. His country was, therefore, in favour of providing bilateral and international assistance to the poorest members of the international community. There was a need for systems for data collection and analysis that would make it possible to determine the causes of human conflicts and tragedies.

10. His delegation endorsed the Secretary-General's proposal that, with a view to resolving conflicts, the work of the United Nations should be coordinated with that of the regional bodies referred to in Chapter VIII of the Charter. It was important to respect the role of the United Nations in the implementation of

Security Council resolutions and in conducting peace-keeping operations. It was also important to consolidate United Nations financing so that the Organization could carry out those operations. His delegation endorsed the peacemaking efforts of the Secretary-General and supported the efforts of bilateral groups to collaborate and exchange information with countries participating in peace-keeping operations and in the territory of which such operations were being carried out.

11. Mr. SENGWE (Zimbabwe) said that the General Assembly should expand the membership of the Special Committee in order to reflect not only the number of States Members of the United Nations but also their growing involvement in peace-keeping operations. Zimbabwe applauded the United Nations for its work in Mozambique and South Africa, and hoped that the peace process in Angola would be a success. The human and material resources required for peace-keeping were enormous, but Zimbabwe believed that peace-keeping should not be the preserve of a few economically or politically powerful countries. Moreover, it was essential to ensure that the United Nations did not sponsor any course of action that might have been charted to serve the narrow national interests of a handful of countries.

12. Many had asked why the patience of the United Nations seemed to run out faster when the Organization was handling peace-keeping missions in Africa, which was host to an inordinate number of aborted or abandoned peace-keeping missions. The premature withdrawal of Western peace-keepers from the United Nations Operation in Somalia II (UNOSOM II) and its termination had triggered a reaction that had devastated Rwanda and had severely affected Liberia and other conflict areas. Creeping regionalism and the application of double standards in determining the conditions for the deployment or withdrawal of peace-keeping missions clearly undermined the credibility, impartiality and universality of the United Nations.

13. His delegation was gratified that the Secretary-General had convened a meeting in August 1994 with the heads of regional organizations. The Organization of African Unity (OAU) had taken concrete measures to establish a mechanism on conflict prevention and resolution. Zimbabwe had established a national peace-keeping centre which had just held its first training seminar involving Member States in the region. It was essential that the United Nations should become directly involved in regional arrangements and provide financial and other forms of assistance.

14. The deployment of limited multinational or coalition forces which undermined the international nature of United Nations peace-keeping operations presented his delegation with serious concerns. There was a need to define the role of multilateralism in peace-keeping.

15. The success of current peace-keeping operations depended, inter alia, on adequate funding. Member States must fulfil their Charter obligations through prompt payment of their contributions in full and without conditions.

16. Mr. VERDIER (Argentina) said his country agreed that the composition of the Special Committee should be expanded, but was flexible in that regard, and

recalled that within the Committee there were not and there had never been any disputes between Member States and observer States.

17. Argentina attached importance to the training of personnel for peace-keeping operations; in April 1995 it had organized a seminar in which the representatives of 16 American countries had participated, and also recognized the valuable experience provided by the joint participation in the field of military personnel from various countries. Argentina had contributed in many ways to peace-keeping operations, including by making available to the Secretariat, free of charge, officials with experience in that field.

18. Preventive diplomacy and the consolidation of peace once the conflicts had ended were of vital importance, as evidenced in Haiti and the Gaza Strip, where Argentina had collaborated closely with other States in the "white helmets" programme. In that regard, his delegation firmly intended to continue participating in the analysis of the Secretary-General's report "Supplement to an Agenda for Peace".

19. Although peace-keeping operations continued to be a vital tool, it was essential to improve them in the light of experience. An important factor for the future was the perception of such operations held by international public opinion. The United Nations must endeavour to publicize objectively its purposes, successes and problems. Argentina welcomed the stand-by arrangements, which had improved the reaction time of the Organization, and appreciated all the initiatives to that end. It welcomed the Secretary-General's report on improving preparedness for conflict resolution and peace-keeping in Africa (A/50/711), and emphasized the need for the various regions to share responsibility for peace-keeping operations. Furthermore, it considered that the mechanism for information and consultation established by the Security Council was very useful, although there was a need to review and improve it.

20. Argentina could not hide its concern over the current critical situation. It did not believe that there was "fatigue" on the part of the Organization or its Member States; the origin of the crisis was rather of a political and financial nature. It was essential that all Member States should fulfil their obligations in time and without conditions, since the collapse of the great structure that had been erected with such effort would benefit no one.

21. Mr. WANG Xuexian (China) said that peace-keeping operations continued to play a useful role in the prevention of conflicts and the promotion of disputes. However, in reviewing recent United Nations peace-keeping operations, it was not difficult to find deviations from the Charter of the United Nations and norms governing international relations.

22. Peace-keeping operations were often used as an instrument to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries, to impose a certain type of social system and values or to serve the interests of one or two countries. Peace-keeping operations had been increasingly involved in settling internal conflicts, carrying out humanitarian relief and monitoring elections. Their mandates often included the monitoring of human rights and the re-establishment of a country's judicial system as a part of supervising the implementation of peace accords. Peace-keeping operations must observe the purposes and

principles of the Charter of the United Nations, particularly the principles of respect for State sovereignty and non-interference in other's internal affairs.

23. Resort to military force in an attempt to settle conflicts was another dangerous trend. Conflicts had complicated historical causes, and could be solved only through patient, peaceful negotiations. To invoke Chapter VII of the Charter on flimsy grounds, establish multinational forces or turn peace-keeping operations into enforcement actions - or to confuse one with the other - would only aggravate problems and block their settlement. Enforcement actions as set forth in Chapter VII of the Charter could be used only against threats to the peace, breaches of the peace or acts of aggression, and never indiscriminately.

24. There was an increasingly serious trend of adopting double standards in peace-keeping operations. Some countries vigorously promoted those peace-keeping operations which they deemed to be necessary and in conformity with their own interests, and blocked operations they deemed irrelevant. That phenomenon was especially serious for Africa. Double standards would inevitably affect the support of many developing countries for peace-keeping operations, and would also impair the Council's authority and its ability to maintain international peace and security.

25. In one or two peace-keeping operations, the United Nations had been marginalized and replaced by some countries or regional organizations. Such operations were no longer neutral and had even become a party to the conflict. They had thereby lost the trust, support and cooperation of the conflicting parties, and the safety of peace-keeping personnel had been endangered. The operations must therefore reflect the will of all Member States, be carried out under the political guidance of the Security Council and the military command of the United Nations, and count on the participation of as many Member States as possible.

26. The United Nations could not cope with the unlimited expansion of peace-keeping operations and the further increase in their scope, whether in terms of financial or of human resources. It could not and should not take on all international responsibilities, still less try to act as a "world policeman". The Security Council must authorize each peace-keeping operation and its mandate prudently, in the light of the actual situation, the attitude of the parties concerned and the capability of the United Nations.

27. Mr. THANARAJASINGAM (Malaysia) said that it was pertinent to question the future of United Nations peace-keeping activities. He wondered whether financial considerations would become the sole determinant of United Nations peace-keeping operations, and whether peace-keeping would relapse into the familiar pattern of the pre-cold-war era or be franchised to the major Powers. Admittedly there was a sense of disillusionment with the United Nations involvement in peace-keeping, although there had certainly been some successes. The United Nations must learn from past experiences in peace-keeping, both successful and unsuccessful.

28. On the question of enlarging the membership of the Special Committee, Malaysia preferred an open-ended committee for the following reasons: peace-

keeping activities had become an important dimension of United Nations activities; while the Special Committee had 34 members, 84 countries were contributing personnel; from a policy as well as operational point of view, peace-keeping required the attention of all Member States; the Special Committee was the appropriate forum for Member States to air and share their views on the question of peace-keeping; and current practice was to establish open-ended working groups on important issues, such as reform of the Security Council, finance, an agenda for development, and strengthening of the United Nations.

29. For peace-keeping operations to succeed, there was a need for clearly defined mandates, adequate resources and effective leadership. Missions in the field must also have appropriate financial and administrative autonomy, and, therefore, safeguard and oversight procedures to prevent abuse and fraud. Mission officers must coordinate civilian and military issues in the field. The Department of Peace-keeping Operations must maintain and update a personnel register; a questionnaire should be sent to Member States for that purpose. The training of military and civilian personnel through a coordinated programme for creating a truly universal core of "blue helmets" was of great importance. Also important was the need for a consultative mechanism between troop-contributing countries and the Security Council.

30. His Government had agreed to participate in the United Nations Stand-By Forces Unit. It also supported the establishment of a United Nations peace-enforcement force to ensure that the "blue helmets" would not be humiliated or used as bargaining chips. One issue of concern was the financial burden borne by troop-contributing countries, especially developing countries. Efforts should be made by the United Nations to reimburse troop-contributing countries promptly, and there must be equity in compensation for peace-keeping troops from developing and developed countries.

31. Mr. TELLMANN (Norway) said that peace-keeping activities could only be effective if all the legitimate parties were represented in the relevant forums. That should be the main criterion for expansion of the Special Committee. All countries which could contribute to the peace process should be able to participate not only in the Fourth Committee but also in the Special Committee. That was the only way to maintain the proposed division of labour.

32. The continued reluctance of some Member States to pay their contributions in full and on time was unacceptable; it added to the burden on troop-contributing countries and discouraged the participation of developing countries in peace-keeping operations. The United Nations should reimburse troop-contributing countries promptly and also pay for the use of contingent-owned equipment.

33. His Government, which had been actively engaged in the effort to strengthen United Nations command and control capability in peace-keeping operations, supported the recommendations of the Special Committee and noted with satisfaction its intention to keep command and control measures under review. The possibility of taking further measures to enhance United Nations capacity in that area should be studied. He welcomed the progress made over the preceding year in improving dialogue between troop-contributing countries, the Security Council and the Secretary-General.

34. Norway had been actively involved in discussions aimed at improving United Nations response and reserve capability, which should also be extended into the humanitarian area. It had also offered to contribute personnel to the United Nations stand-by headquarters component in the Mission Planning Service of the Department of Peace-keeping Operations. It was studying, with the competent United Nations bodies, an agreement to establish in Norway a United Nations medical depot for peace-keeping and humanitarian aid operations. Thanks to an effective preparedness system for emergency assistance, Norway had sent a fully-equipped field hospital, accompanied by the necessary personnel, to the United Nations operation in Rwanda.

35. In order to increase African countries' participation in peace-keeping operations, the Government of Norway had organized a joint Norwegian-southern Africa project called "Training for Peace", which had been operational since 1 October 1995. The objectives of the project, developed in consultation with the Department of Peace-keeping Operations and OAU, were to contribute to the establishing of reserve forces for peace-keeping operations under United Nations or OAU auspices, and to analyse the potential for merging strategies for long-term socio-economic development with measures for conflict prevention and conflict management. His delegation felt that steps should be taken to develop the relationship between peace-keeping operations and the more long-term responsibilities of the United Nations in war-torn societies.

36. Since regional organizations were playing a new role in conflict resolution, it would be fitting for the Special Committee to begin to harmonize the vocabulary and definitions used in peace-keeping and related activities.

37. Mr. DUMITRIU (Romania) supported the statement made by the representative of Spain on behalf of the European Union and other States and repeated Romania's commitment to the cause of peace-keeping and security. Romania currently ranked twentieth among countries contributing troops to peace-keeping operations. In addition, the Government of Romania and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) had hosted a seminar on the legal aspects of peace-keeping in Bucharest in July 1995 attended by representatives of 25 member countries of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and NATO, as well as Japan, participating as an "active observer".

38. Two Romanian soldiers having died in Angola in May 1995 while in United Nations service, his delegation did not consider arrangements for death or disability compensation to be a remote or theoretical issue and urged the competent United Nations bodies to approve those arrangements as quickly as possible.

39. The Fourth Committee must decide how often consultations should be held between troop-contributing countries, members of the Security Council and the Secretariat. Consultations should be held concerning the United Nations Angola Verification Mission III (UNAVEM III), especially the results of the investigation of various incidents, and the safety, health and morale of United Nations troops.

40. His delegation greatly appreciated the Canadian proposal concerning the draft resolution under discussion and the Finnish proposal for a more focused

approach in the work of the Special Committee. Such a course of action would not affect the comprehensive nature of the Special Committee's mandate and would offer room for members to contribute to its work more effectively; the Special Committee should keep in mind that there was an intrinsic relationship between preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peace-keeping and post-conflict peace-building.

41. The United Nations must improve the security environment for peace-keepers and pay particular attention to the security dimension when planning peace-keeping operations. Romania had signed the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel in September 1995 and hoped that it would enter into force as soon as possible.

42. Finally, his delegation expressed its gratitude to the military advisers of the permanent missions to the United Nations, which had contributed to reforming the methodology used to determine reimbursements for contingent-owned equipment.

43. Mr. ZIAUDDIN (Bangladesh) said that his delegation supported the role which the United Nations was playing in conflict resolution and peacemaking. Bangladesh was currently the fifth largest troop contributor with several thousand military and civilian personnel deployed in over 11 conflict areas. The Special Committee should be expanded in order to address the complexity of world problems. As a major troop contributor, Bangladesh wished to be involved in the Special Committee's work.

44. His delegation congratulated the Secretary-General on creating a framework for coordination between the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Peace-keeping Operations, and the establishment of stand-by arrangements. The Secretary-General should draw qualified personnel from the main troop-contributing countries and other associated bodies, and ensure the just and equitable representation of all countries in the bodies responsible for peace-keeping and at mission areas. Bangladesh had decided in principle to participate in the stand-by arrangements instituted by the Secretary-General and was in the process of finalizing details of the troop contributions that it intended to place at the disposal of the Organization. It was necessary to study further the Secretary-General's suggestion that, when a Member State could not provide equipment for peace-keeping operations - which was sometimes the case with smaller countries - standing arrangements should be made with another State which was able to do so.

45. The financing of peace-keeping operations was the responsibility of all States Members of the United Nations, which should pay their assessed contributions in full and on time. Timely payments would be helpful in preparing comprehensive budget estimates for peace-keeping operations and the United Nations would be in a position to reimburse troop-contributing countries the amounts they were owed.

46. His delegation believed that it was vitally important to strengthen the safety of United Nations and associated personnel. The fact that so many peace-keepers had lost their lives in recent years gave cause for grave concern. Bangladesh, which had also made sacrifices in certain missions, felt that the United Nations should pay compensation for death or disability. There was also

an urgent and essential need for a clearly defined and unified command and control structure for all peace-keeping operations, which were overly complex.

47. Mr. KARSGAARD (Canada) said that Canada fully supported the proposals, recommendations and conclusions of the Special Committee's report (A/50/230). The majority of troop-contributing countries, as well as other countries interested in the question of United Nations peace-keeping, had been represented during the deliberations of the Special Committee and the informal consultations on the draft resolution which the Committee currently had before it, which attested to the continuing interest in improving the Organization's capacity to conduct peace-keeping operations. The fact that the 58 proposals, recommendati s and conclusions in the Special Committee's report had resulted from consensus also demonstrated the importance of multilateral cooperation in that area of the Organization's activity.

48. In his report to the General Assembly on 26 September 1995, the Canadian Minister for Foreign Affairs had acknowledged the increased complexity and difficulties associated with peace-keeping missions during the 1990s, proposed a broad reform of the many elements of peace-keeping, and put forward recommendations with a view to reducing the delays between the approval of a United Nations mandate and the deployment of peace-keepers to a mission area. Canada had submitted 26 practical recommendations which could be implemented progressively over the short, medium or long term. The recommendations focused on six key areas: high-level decision-making; financial procedures; operational-level command and control; stand-by arrangements; logistics, training and equipment; and, for the long term, the possibility of a permanent United Nations emergency group. His delegation wished to discuss those recommendations with interested delegations and with the Secretariat, and intended to approach the Special Committee to seek guidance on implementation of the recommendations.

49. It was encouraging that Member States and the Secretariat had taken up the question of improving the ability of the United Nations to respond rapidly to crisis situations. His delegation also noted with satisfaction the strides made by the Secretariat in enhancing its capabilities in the areas of mission planning, training support, finance and logistics, demining, civilian police, and consultation with troop-contributing countries. In that connection, his delegation recognized the contribution made by Mr. Kofi Annan, former Under-Secretary-General for Peace-keeping Operations, and looked forward to working closely with Mr. Ismat T. Kittani, the current Under-Secretary-General.

50. In recent years, both the number of troop-contributing countries and interest in the policy and practice of peace-keeping had grown considerably, and it was clearly time to readdress the issue of membership of the Special Committee. His delegation welcomed expansion of the Special Committee and requested that it should avoid sterile debate on issues not directly related to the capacity of the United Nations to effectively conduct peace-keeping operations.

51. Since the inception of United Nations peace-keeping activities, Canada had invested a great deal of effort in enhancing multilateral cooperation in that area. Despite the serious problems experienced during the difficult missions in

Somalia, Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia, his delegation believed that the United Nations should persevere in its efforts to improve the capacity to plan and conduct the complex missions of the 1990s.

52. Mr. OWADA (Japan) said that the Special Commemorative Meeting of the General Assembly to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations had provided an opportunity to reflect upon the Organization's history and to assess both its accomplishments and shortcomings. The Organization's peace-keeping activities had been one of its most innovative and successful achievements in the maintenance of international peace and security.

53. There was no doubt that, in the wake of recent developments in the former Yugoslavia, the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) could be scaled down drastically. Moreover, the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) would expire in December 1995 and that of the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH) in February 1996. Personnel involved in United Nations peace-keeping operations could thus be reduced by almost a third. Nevertheless, despite some criticism concerning various recent operations, Japan remained convinced that peace-keeping operations would have a vital role to play in the post-cold-war era. It should be the task of the Special Committee to reaffirm confidence in United Nations peace-keeping operations and to utilize profitably the suggestions of Member States for enhancing their effectiveness.

54. It was important to adopt a realistic approach that built on lessons learned from past experience. In that respect, Japan welcomed the fact that the Secretary-General had emphasized the role to be played by traditional peace-keeping operations, the principles of which had contributed in large measure to their success. Regarding the concept of peace enforcement, his delegation believed that, should an operation of that kind become necessary, its mandate would have to stipulate clearly the precise extent of the power and authority to be granted and the specific period of its duration.

55. It was gratifying to see that the Special Committee's report had incorporated a number of points to which Japan attached particular importance. The first was the rapid-reaction capability of the United Nations. In view of the difficulties involved in organizing a United Nations rapid-reaction force, Japan believed that it would be more realistic to enhance the state of readiness of peace-keeping units by strengthening the current stand-by arrangements. His delegation advocated the establishment of additional depots for reserve stock of equipment. It would thus be possible to avoid complications in equipping peace-keepers and shorten the lead time required for their deployment. His delegation also welcomed the various initiatives put forward by some Member States for reinforcing peace-keeping capabilities in Africa. Conscious of the importance of the role which Japan could play in that field, the Japanese Government, in cooperation with the United Nations University, had recently held a high-level symposium on problems of conflict in Africa.

56. The second point concerned the security of those engaged in United Nations peace-keeping activities and other related efforts in the field of humanitarian assistance. Japan had been one of the first countries to accept the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel. His Government recognized, however, that the establishment of a legal framework was no

substitute for improvements in the manner in which operations were carried out. His Government hoped that the question of the safety of personnel would be dealt with in an appropriate United Nations forum.

57. Thirdly, the matter of the training of non-military personnel engaged in peace-keeping activities would have to be considered seriously. The Secretariat should prepare a comprehensive plan describing the training needs and the measures to be taken by Member States to meet those needs.

58. Lastly, his delegation believed that it was essential for the United Nations to review each peace-keeping operation after its completion, with a view to learning lessons for the future. Japan had, on its own initiative, organized several seminars on that issue. In addition to the symposium on Africa, it had hosted jointly with the United Nations University and the International Peace Academy a symposium on new dimensions of the United Nations peace-keeping operations, which had been held in Tokyo. It was gratifying that the Special Committee, on the basis of a Japanese proposal, was recommending that the Secretary-General should invite the Force Commanders or his special representatives who had been involved in completed peace-keeping operations to brief Member States.

59. With the enactment in 1992 of the International Peace Cooperation Law, Japan had established the necessary legal framework for its participation in United Nations peace-keeping activities. Since then, it had sent peace-keepers to UNTAC in Cambodia and to ONUMOZ in Mozambique, and electoral observers to ONUSAL in El Salvador. In 1996 Japan intended to send units to participate in UNDOF in the Golan Heights.

60. Mr. QWABE (Swaziland) said that the United Nations had done commendable work in bringing about peace in certain areas of conflict. Peace-keeping operations and missions could not be carried out without appropriate financial resources, and he was concerned that the fact that resources needed for peace-keeping operations had amounted to $3 billion in 1995, three times the amount of the regular budget. Such operations should be kept at the level of Member States' capacity to pay. He appealed to all Member States to honour their financial obligations in full and on time. It was important to find an immediate solution to the problems which had cropped up in the course of operations, such as loss of cash, loss of equipment due to insecure storage and poor management, overpayment for purchases of goods, and purchases in excess of actual requirements.

61. He welcomed the cooperation between the United Nations and various regional organizations in conflict prevention and resolution. He noted with particular satisfaction the cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in many parts of Africa, including Angola, Burundi, Lesotho, Liberia, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa and Western Sahara. He hoped that the United Nations would develop valuable training tools to assist Member States and regional institutions in the development of peace-keeping skills. Certain peace-keeping operations had been deployed without adequate logistics arrangements, as in the case of Somalia, and that could be avoided.

62. Non-governmental organizations had played an important security role and had provided humanitarian assistance in areas of political conflict. The Baphalali Swaziland Red Cross Society had provided assistance to many refugees and other persons who had come to Swaziland because of the political situation in their countries of origin. The Society's main objectives were to act in cases of armed conflict, to provide emergency relief services to the victims of disasters of any type, and to provide assistance in all fields covered by the Geneva Conventions. He appealed to the international community to provide the necessary financial assistance in order for that organization to fulfil its humanitarian role.

63. Swaziland believed in peaceful settlement of national and international conflicts, solved its internal differences through peaceful means, and strongly upheld the principles of preventive diplomacy. Following recent experiences in Africa, an awareness had emerged of the need for better coordination in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-keeping. With the support of the Security Council and the General Assembly, the United Nations had pursued more effective cooperation with regional organizations. His delegation welcomed those initiatives.

64. Mr. KEATING (New Zealand) said that his delegation did not agree with those who had suggested that United Nations peace-keeping activities were becoming less important. On the contrary, peace-keeping must remain central to the Organization's global mission, as had been explicitly spelled out in the Declaration on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations.

65. Regarding the financial crisis, the United Nations could not go on extending credit indefinitely to non-payers, at the expense of troop-contributing countries whose unpaid reimbursements continued to increase. His Government firmly opposed the current Secretariat practice of regarding financial obligations to troop-contributing countries as less important than other financial commitments. All creditors must be treated equally. There were inequities in the current scale of assessments, and they must be rectified. However, they were no excuse for reneging on obligations, which could not be abrogated by unilateral decisions. All Member States must pay their contributions in full and on time. Failure to do so undermined the effectiveness of peace-keeping operations.

66. His delegation welcomed the reorganization and enhancement of the capabilities of the Department of Peace-keeping Operations, particularly in the fields of mission planning, field administration and logistics and training. His country, which had provided a number of military officers to the Department of Peace-keeping Operations, was concerned at suggestions that the latter should phase out many of the secondment; that would be a serious mistake. The Secretary-General's modest proposal to strengthen the Department deserved support but that should not be at the expense of the professionalism which serving officers could bring.

67. New Zealand believed that a strengthened Department of Peace-keeping Operations would permit the Organization to concentrate on longer-term projects. New Zealand had had a hand in one such project: the preparation of the Handbook for Logistics Support. His Government had also supported efforts to improve

peace-keeping training, for example, through the establishment of training assistance teams. He welcomed the Committee's call for a study of the possibility of attaching such teams to field missions. Pre-positioning training was another area where Member States could share their experience. In August 1995, New Zealand had hosted observers from eight Member States of the ASEAN Regional Forum at an UNPROFOR pre-deployment exercise. New Zealand looked forward to building on that cooperation and dialogue in 1996 through the ASEAN Regional Forum intersessional meetings on cooperation, including peace-keeping, to be co-sponsored by Malaysia and Canada.

68. Training would also be an important component of any new cooperative arrangement aimed at improving the ready-reaction capability of the United Nations. New Zealand had been one of several countries which had met at the ministerial level in September 1995 and had endorsed initiatives to improve the capacity of the United Nations to respond rapidly in crises situations. Those proposals were intended to build on the system of stand-by arrangements currently in place, to which his Government had made a formal commitment.

69. The ability of the United Nations to react rapidly to Security Council decisions to establish peace-keeping operations depended also on good communications between the Council and those countries prepared to contribute. Troop contributors must be assured that their forces would be given a clear and achievable task, that there were provisions for regular review of operations, and that the safety of their nationals was being taken into consideration. A year earlier New Zealand and Argentina had initiated discussion in the Security Council of new institutional arrangements for consultations with troop-contributing countries. The outcome had been a commitment to practical measures to enhance consultation. Consultation with troop contributors was still not working satisfactorily. The time had come for the Security Council to reopen that issue and to pursue it in open dialogue with the troop-contributing countries.

70. With respect to the membership of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations, as draft resolution A/C.4/50/L.10 acknowledged, there was widespread interest in contributing to the Special Committee's work. While New Zealand supported the call for the Special Committee to address the expansion of its membership, there was only one realistic option - open-ended membership. Criteria should not be established so as to keep membership of the Committee limited and exclusive. Almost any set of criteria would exclude some States with legitimate interests. However, if there were to be criteria, one obvious and essential one would be that any State in arrears for peace-keeping contributions would be disqualified from participation.

71. It must be recognized that a wide range of United Nations Members had an interest in peace-keeping. Peace-keeping underpinned an international security system of which developmental security, economic security and human rights were component parts. His delegation did not believe that efficiency was inversely proportional to the number of Committee members. Support for limited membership seemed little more than an effort to perpetuate a privileged elite.

72. Mr. KOVANDA (Czech Republic) said that, while peace-keeping operations represented one of the most significant means for contributing to conflict

resolution and promotion of peace, they could not replace the political settlement of disputes. His delegation did not endorse one-sided negative assessments of the effectiveness of peace-keeping operations and fully supported all decisions leading to their improvement. The proposed termination of some operations should create favourable conditions for a certain stabilization of peace-keeping operations and for conducting a thorough review of the issue as a whole. Recent practices in implementing peace-keeping operations had proven certain well-tested principles concerning mandate, financing, planning, unity of command and control, impartiality and transparency. The end of the cold war had spawned unrealistic expectations as to what the United Nations could accomplish. The example of the "safe areas" in Bosnia and Herzegovina had demonstrated that it was impossible to maintain tight control over a mandate which had been unachievable from the outset. Once a peace-keeping operation was deployed, if belligerent parties withdrew their support for a peace agreement and for the role of the United Nations and decided to obstruct its efforts, the peace-keeping operation must be terminated. The other alternative would be to use force, which was generally unacceptable.

73. The use of rapid reaction force units in the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) had no precedent in peace-keeping operations. Without drawing any premature conclusions, it was clear that their use, in combination with the activities of the relevant regional organization, had constituted a significant deterrent and means of coercion with respect to all belligerents. On the other hand, it must be recognized that the use of force beyond self-defence risked compromising the neutrality of the United Nations force and turning it into a party to the conflict. Generally speaking, peace-keepers were neither trained nor equipped for enforcement operations. The use of force should therefore be viewed as a last resort and it should be used only for strictly defined purposes whilst exercising maximum efforts to maintain the impartiality of the United Nations.

74. The use of regional organizations in United Nations peace-keeping operations required compliance with all general and specific principles of cooperation between such organizations and the United Nations. His country appreciated all measures leading to closer cooperation with such organizations. The current financial difficulties of the United Nations made it very tempting to shift the responsibility for solving conflicts to regional organizations exclusively and to replace United Nations peace-keeping operations with various joint task forces representing certain coalition groupings and endorsed by the Security Council. Clearly, countries participating in such operations would finance them from their own resources and that was precisely where there was a certain weakness inasmuch as only countries with sufficient resources and with well-equipped and trained troops could afford to participate in them.

75. He supported further improvements in the machinery for consultations among the Security Council, the Secretariat and troop contributors. That machinery should provide for consultations with potential contributors before the mandate of a new operation was established. Troop contributors were at the mercy of the members of the Security Council. He hoped, nevertheless, that Council members would view those consultations not just as an obligation but as an input into the formulation of mandates. While members of the Council had the political responsibility for formulating mandates, the practical experience from the field

might not always reach them directly. He also welcomed the proposal to establish a United Nations rapid deployment brigade under the Department of Peace-keeping Operations, as it could strengthen the planning, organization and coordination processes prior to the actual deployment of missions and might fill a gap in analysing terminated peace-keeping operations.

76. When deploying a peace-keeping operation, it was indispensable to fully inform the population of the country in question of its objectives. Information campaigns must be conducted and public relations mechanisms should be incorporated into the planning of all operations. His delegation also supported the proposal of the European Union to work out a code of conduct for peace-keeping operations. The ongoing improvements in the United Nations Stand-by Arrangements system were important for the effectiveness and efficiency of operations.

77. By the end of 1995, troops of the Czech Republic would have pulled out from their very first peace-keeping operation, UNPROFOR/UNCRO, one of the most complex and controversial operations in the history of peace-keeping operations. His country wished to pay a tribute to all the men and women of all nations who had fallen in peace-keeping operations, trying selflessly to bring peace to countries which were often far from their own.

78. Mr. MACEDO (Mexico), noting the recent increase in the number of peace-keeping operations and the complexity of the tasks entrusted to them, said that, although the constant use of peaceful means for the settlement of disputes was an encouraging sign, it was also the clearest indication that the underlying causes of international conflicts had not disappeared. Peace-keeping operations could not and should not replace dialogue between the parties; they could only accompany and support the efforts undertaken by the interested parties.

79. One of the basic principles that should govern the conduct of peace-keeping operations was the consent of the parties to the presence of personnel in their territory, the terms and conditions of their deployment and the scope of their duties. The impartiality of the operations carried out by the Blue Helmets and their non-use of force, except in legitimate self-defence, were terms that should also be applied to peace-keeping operations.

80. However, a peace-keeping operation could be effective only when Member States were prepared to provide the necessary personnel, equipment and financing. His delegation therefore urged the Security Council, in particular its five permanent members, to ensure the logistical success of every operation they decided to establish.

81. His delegation reiterated its call for a reassessment of the tendency to invoke Chapter VII of the Charter as grounds for establishing peace-keeping operations, since that Chapter, which dealt exclusively with coercive measures that the United Nations could take to impose sanctions on those who violated the international legal order, was an exception and its provisions could not be made a general rule or applied indiscriminately to different situations.

82. His delegation also urged the United Nations to abandon the practice of replacing peace-keeping operations with multinational forces under the command

of one Member State; there was no legal basis for that measure, which was contrary to the spirit and letter of the Charter.

83. Peace-keeping operations should be financed from the United Nations budget, and the five permanent members of the Security Council should, in accordance with their special responsibilities for peace-keeping and international security, continue to bear a larger share of the financial burden.

84. His delegation reiterated the need for extreme care to be taken when considering initiatives to increase the Organization's rapid-response capability. Although they might appear attractive, they had not been envisioned in the Charter and their legal and financial implications therefore had to be carefully scrutinized. Moreover, it was essential to avoid reinforcing the image of the United Nations as an organization with a military purpose. The United Nations had been established to keep the peace.

85. It was essential to observe the principle of the unified command and control of United Nations forces, since that was the only way to guarantee the success and unity of operations and to ensure that the collective will was represented rather than the political interests of the troop-contributing countries. Consultations with those countries should be strengthened and technical efficiency and training, not simply political criteria, should be the decisive factor in appointing commanders.

86. With regard to the expansion of the Special Committee, his delegation supported the proposal, contained in the draft resolution under consideration, to make it open-ended.

87. Mr. MOUBARAK (Lebanon) said that, although 30 years had elapsed since the establishment of the Special Committee, that Committee had yet to adopt an appropriate framework for peace-keeping operations because, despite the fact that the end of the cold war had created a favourable climate for it, it faced two problems, namely, its limited composition and the new tasks being entrusted to peace-keeping operations. Since 1988, 20 new peace-keeping operations had been established, and the number of personnel involved in those operations had greatly increased.

88. The solution of the problem of the limited composition of the Special Committee called for a clear redefinition of its mandate, which was linked to the mandate of other open-ended bodies involved in the peace programme. It had to be borne in mind that peace-keeping operations and security were related to peace-building and preventive diplomacy.

89. His delegation believed that peace-keeping operations were the Organization's best means of responding to conflicts. The Members of the United Nations should therefore contribute to the redefinition of the Special Committee's mandate and should provide it with the necessary means to fulfil its task. As part of that task, the Committee should study the experience of various peace-keeping operations, since some of them had been successful, while others had not achieved their objectives.

90. The Middle East had been the setting for peace-keeping operations ever since that mechanism had been created. The emergency forces of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) were continuing their selfless and important work in southern Lebanon. His delegation recognized the importance of that work and the effectiveness with which it was still being carried out. However, UNIFIL had not been able to complete the tasks entrusted to it by the Security Council, owing to Israel's refusal to implement the relevant resolutions. He thanked the military staff of UNIFIL for their cooperation with the Lebanese army and their assistance to the civilian population of southern Lebanon. The presence of those forces had given the population of that region of Lebanon the political and humanitarian support it needed to stand up to the abuses perpetrated by Israel. He also thanked those States that had contributed to UNIFIL operations, and the Secretary-General and his assistants in the Secretariat for their untiring efforts to promote peace.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.